

# Creative Approaches to Reading Comprehension



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# Timothy Rasinski

Home

Products

Blog

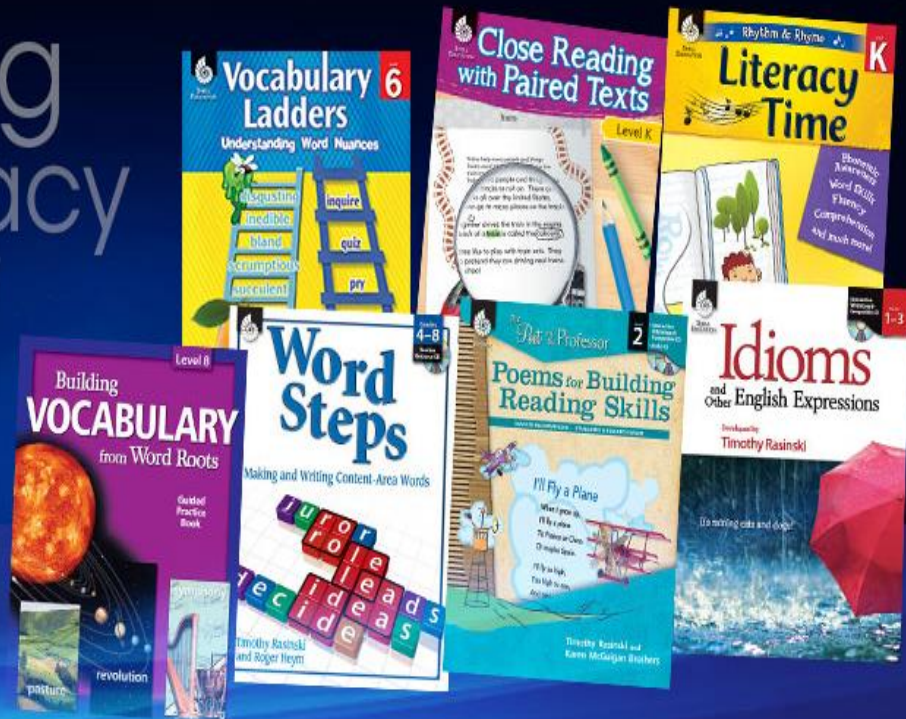
Resources

References



**Timothy Rasinski, Ph.D.**  
*Professor of Reading Education  
Reading and Writing Center  
Kent State University*

reading  
literacy  
fluency



# A “Bridge” Model of Reading Instruction

**Word Study**

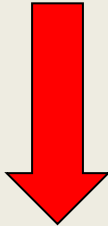
**Word Decoding, Vocabulary and Spelling**



**Fluency Instruction**

**Automaticity in Word Recognition**

**Prosody (Expressiveness in Reading)**



**Comprehension (Guided Reading)**

**Authentic Reading**

**Comprehension Strategies**

**Foundational Reading  
Competencies**

# 2013 NAEP Results

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

## Students Fall Flat In Vocabulary Test

BY STEPHANIE BANCHERO

U.S. students knew only about half of what they were expected to on a new vocabulary section of a national exam, in the latest evidence of severe shortcomings in the nation's reading education.

Eighth-graders scored an average of 265 out of 500 in vocabulary on the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress, the results of which were made public Thursday. Fourth-graders averaged a score of 218 out of 500.

The results showed that nearly half of eighth-graders didn't know that "permeates" means to "spread all the way through," and about the same proportion of fourth-graders didn't know that "puzzled" means confused—words that educators think students in those grades should recognize.

Most fourth-graders did know the meaning of "created," "spread" and "underestimate." At eighth grade, most students knew "grimace," "icons" and "edible."

The new vocabulary test was embedded in the biennial national reading exam, known as the NAEP. Last year's scores were in line with those posted in 2009, the first time vocabulary scores were broken out, but the latest results

at the University of Pittsburgh, said she wasn't surprised by the results but that they are cause for concern. "There is very little vocabulary done in any classroom at any age," said Ms. McKeown.

Leslie Russell, a reading specialist at Butts Road Intermediate School in Chesapeake, Va., said the vocabulary scores could be improved if students were more immersed in literacy at school and at home. "We need to make more of an effort to get parents involved in teaching reading and teaching them how to help children make sense of words they do not know," she said.

In 2009, 12th-graders also took the exam administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Their average score was 296 out of 500 on the vocabulary portion.

The department has given the reading exam for decades but decided to add new questions in 2009 to more fully test students' knowledge of grade-level vocabulary. The words were embedded in reading passages and students were asked their definition in a multiple-choice format.

"Without a strong vocabulary, any child's ability to read and to learn suffers."



# A **GREAT** Way to Teach Words





- Harbor

- Harbor
- Arbor



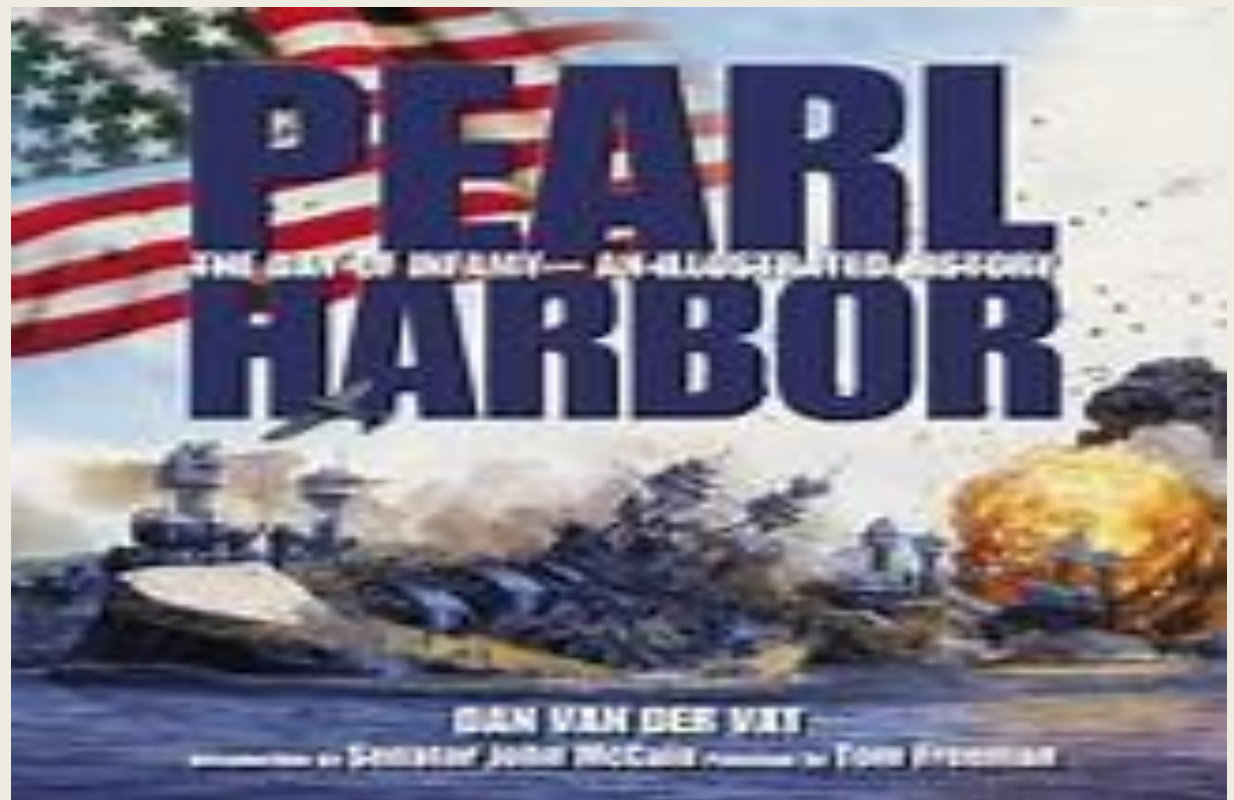
- Harbor
- Arbor
- Roar

- Harbor
- Arbor
- Roar
- Rear

- Harbor
- Arbor
- Roar
- Rear
- Bear

- Harbor
- Arbor
- Roar
- Rear
- Bear
- Pear

- **Harbor**
- Arbor
- Roar
- Rear
- Bear
- Pear
- **Pearl**



“Relative to children randomly assigned to a control group, children assigned to word building (word ladders) demonstrated significantly greater improvements in standardized measures of phonological awareness, (word) decoding, and reading comprehension.”

McCandliss, Beck, Perfetti. *Scientific Studies in Reading*





NEW! 48

Grades K-1

# Word Ladders

80+ Word Study Activities That Target Key Phonics Skills to Boost Young Learners' Reading, Writing & Spelling Confidence



Timothy V. Rasinski

# **Latin and Greek Roots (Morphemes)**

- **Grat / Grac = THANKS**

# Grat / Grac = THANKS

**Grateful**

**Gratitude**

**Grace**

**Gracious**

**Gratuity**

**Ingrate**

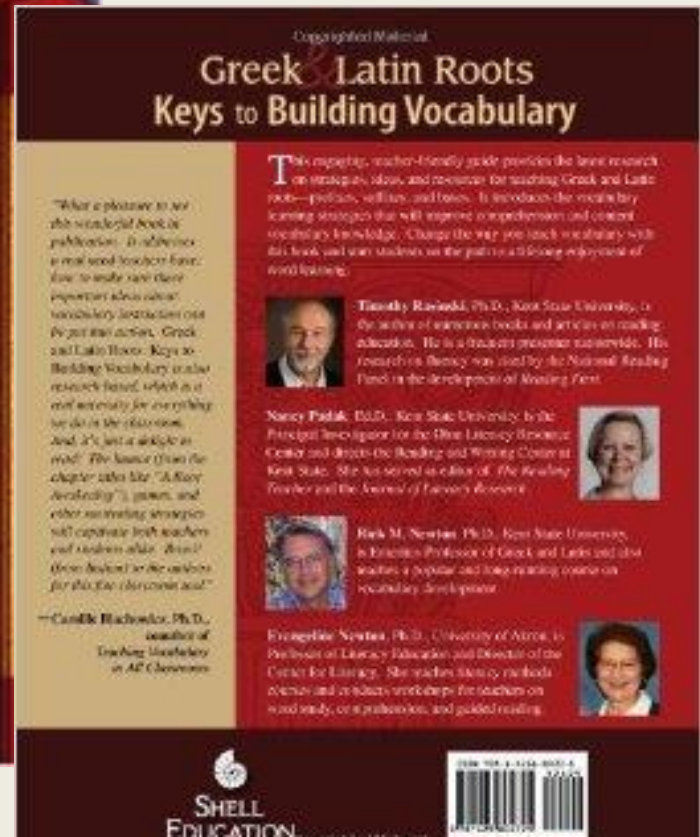
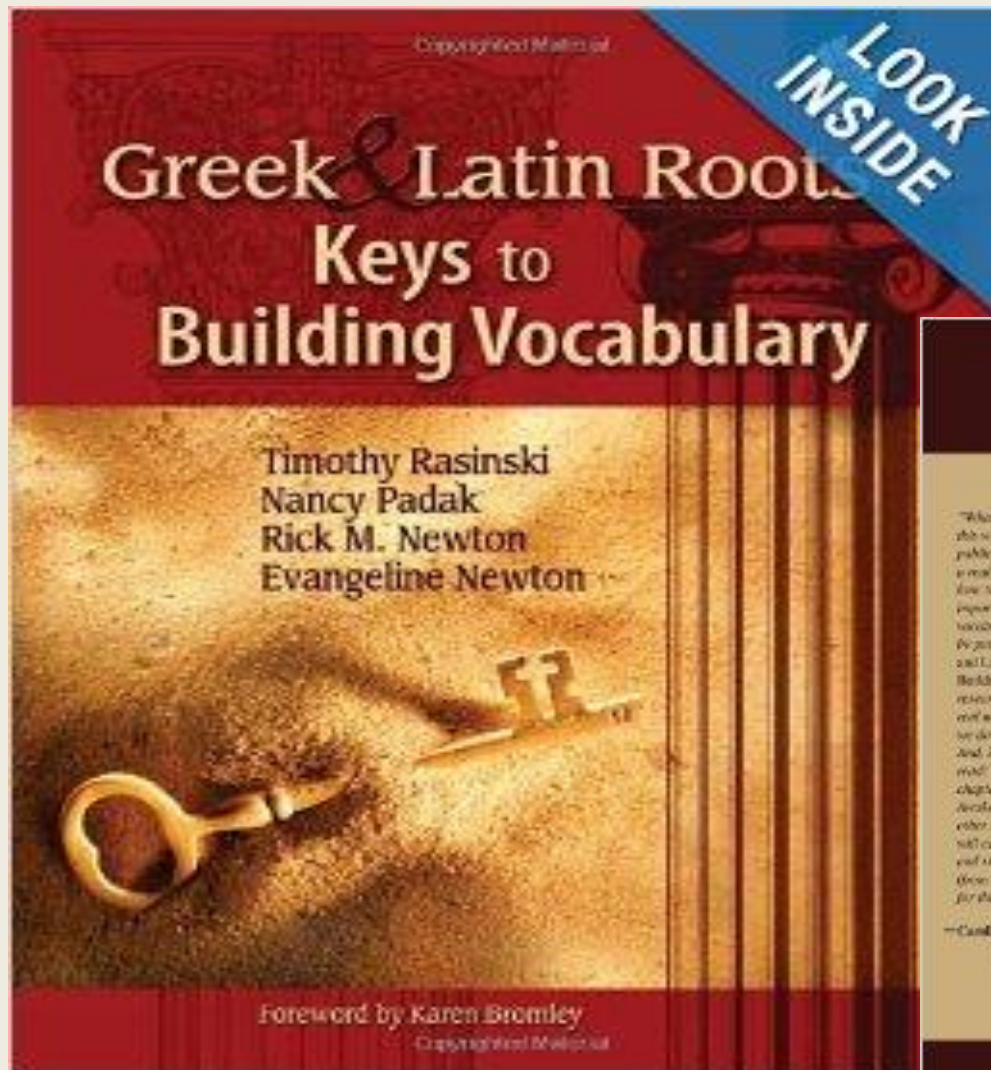
**Congratulate**

**Gracias**





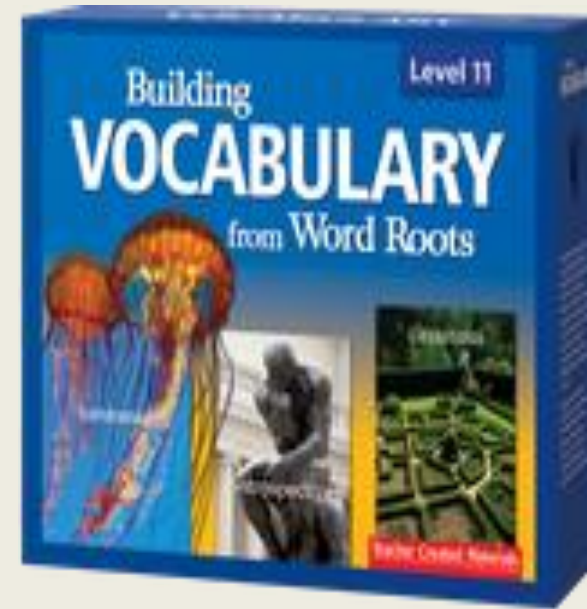
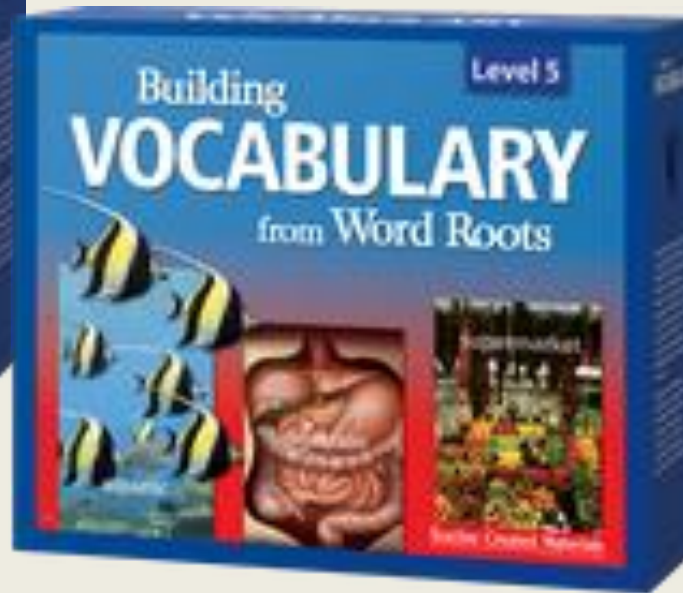
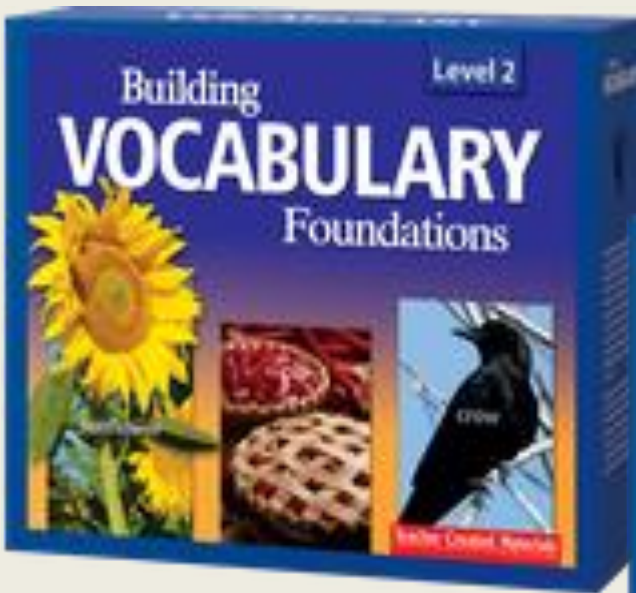
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# Vocab Programs

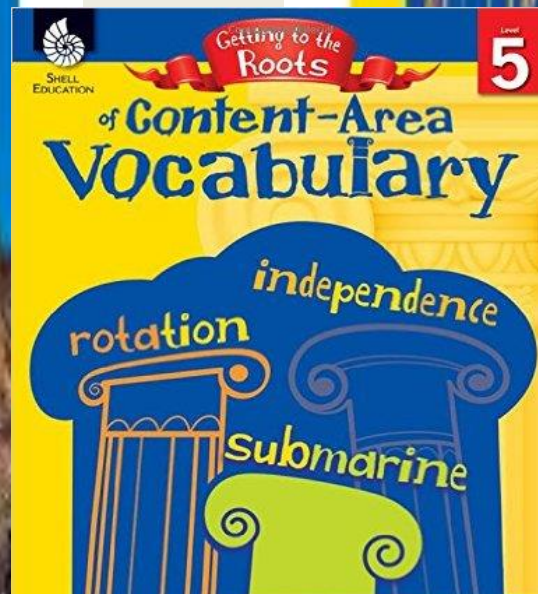
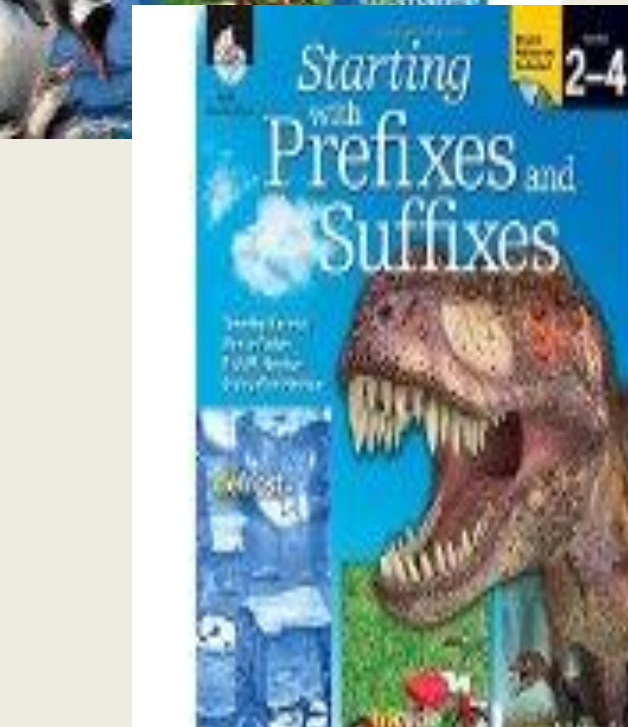
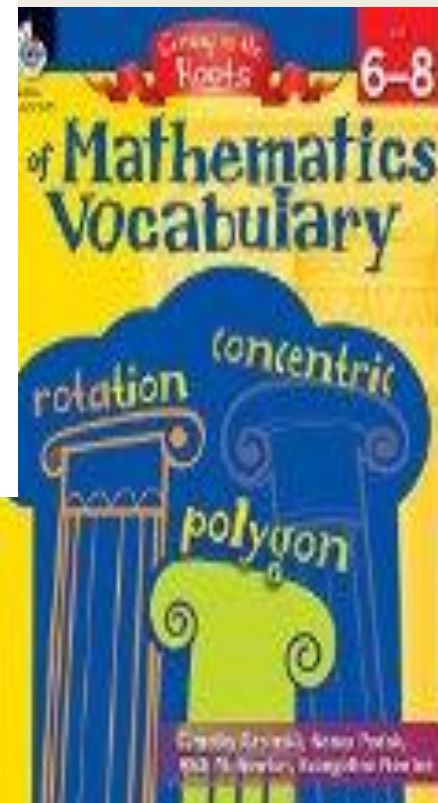
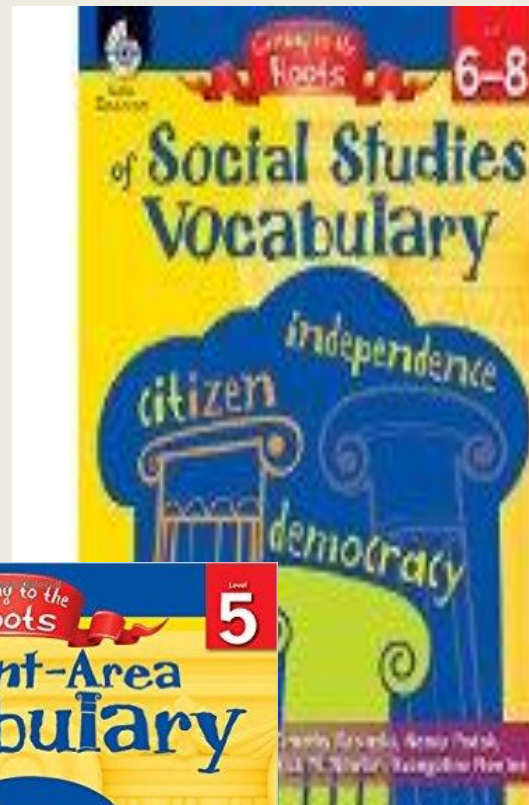
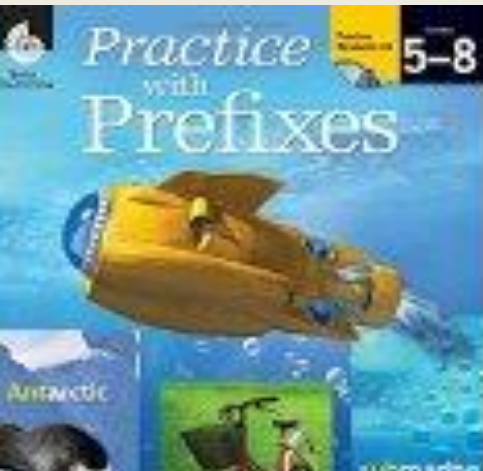
## *Building Vocabulary*

*(tcmpub.com)*





# Student Resources



# A “Bridge” Model of Reading Instruction

**Word Study**

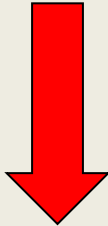
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# WHY READING FLUENCY SHOULD BE HOT!

*Timothy V. Rasinski*

In 2009, an annual survey of experts (Cassidy & Cassidy, 2010) in reading determined that reading fluency was no longer a hot topic for reading. Moreover, those same experts determined that fluency should also not be considered a hot topic. The 2010 survey reports the same results (Cassidy, Ortlieb, & Shettel, 2011). How could this be?

The National Reading Panel's (NRP; 2000) survey of research in reading determined that reading fluency was, indeed, one of the pillars of effective reading instruction. Subsequent summaries of reading research have also determined that there is a solid body of research that supports reading fluency instruction (Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Rasinski, 2010; Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003; Rasinski, Reutzel, Chard, & Linan-Thompson, 2011). In this article, I explore why fluency has become such a pariah in the reading field, and I also discuss why it should be a central element to any effective fluency curriculum and how this can happen.

## **Why Fluency Is Not Hot**

There are several reasons why fluency has lost its allure among reading educators and experts. The first problem lies in the way that fluency is generally measured. Reading rate (the number of words a reader can read on grade level text in a minute) has come to be the quintessential measure of reading fluency. This comes from studies that have shown high correlations between reading rate and reading comprehension. This correlational research has evolved into a definition of reading fluency as reading fast. As a result, reading fluency instruction has become in many classrooms a quest for speed. Students are provided with instruction that emphasizes increasing reading rate.

If fluency is nothing more than reading fast, then fluency instruction should be considered cold. In its

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# Fluency

- **Fluency Development Lesson - Tomorrow**

# A “Bridge” Model of Reading Instruction

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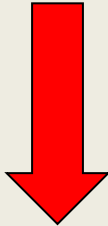
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# Conventional Approaches to Comprehension

- Build Foundational Reading Competencies
- Build Background
- Compare and Contrast (Text to text, text to life, text to world connections. Venn Diagrams)



- The notes were sour because the seams were split.

- We were really disappointed at the bagpipe concert. The notes were sour because the seams were split.



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# Conventional Approaches to Comprehension

- Build Foundational Reading Competencies
- Build Background
- Compare and Contrast (Text to text, text to life, text to world connections. Venn Diagrams)
- Imagery

- **Carefully I walked down the deserted alley.**

# Conventional Approaches

- Build Foundational Reading Competencies
- Build Background
- Compare and Contrast (Text to text, text to life, text to world connections. Venn Diagrams)
- Imagery
- Prediction - Hypothesis



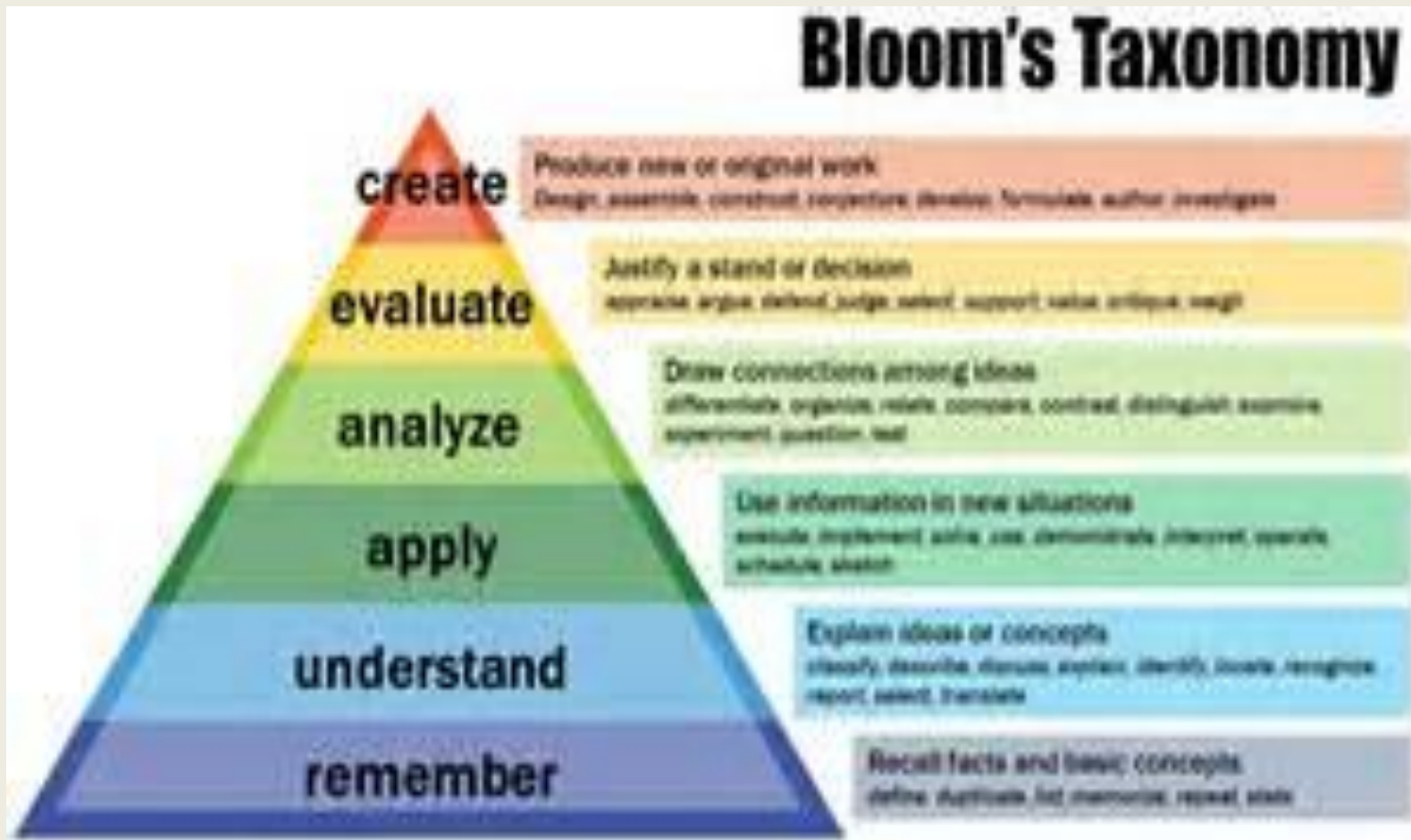
“Oh Bill, I missed you,” Marcia  
cried.

“Oh Bill, I missed you,” Marcia cried. Then she aimed and fired again.

# Conventional Approaches

- Build Foundational Reading Competencies
- Build Background
- Compare and Contrast (Text to text, text to life, text to world connections. Venn Diagrams)
- Imagery
- Prediction – Hypothesis
- Discussion
- Response Writing

# Creative Approaches to Comprehension



# Creative Approaches to Comprehension

*Copy – Change*

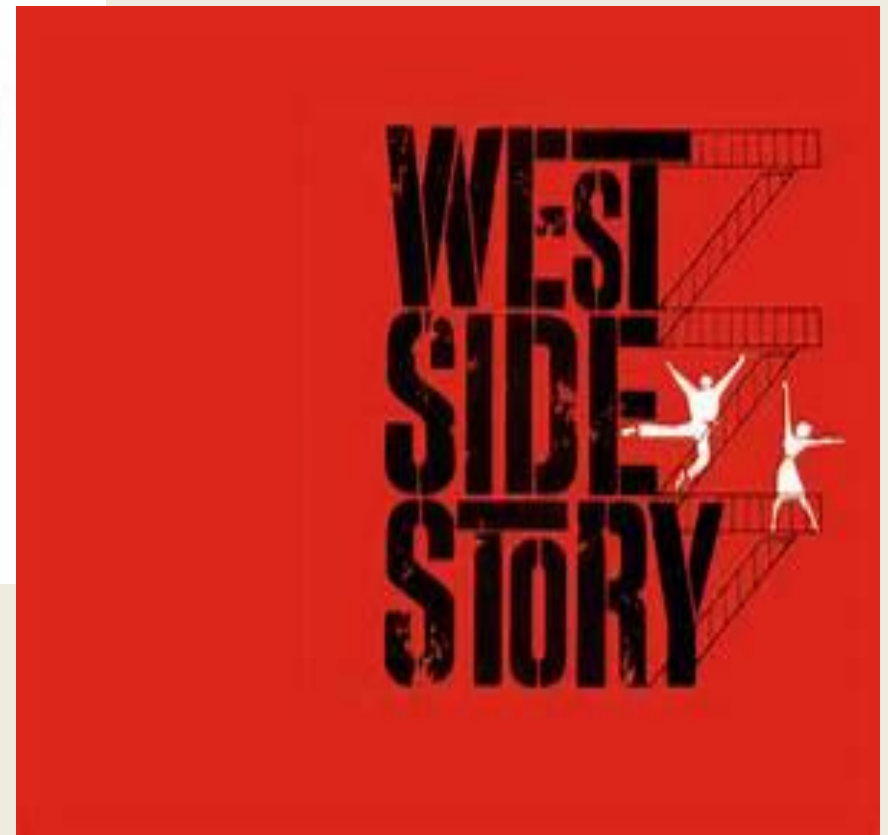
*Keep the Content Change the Form*

# Creative Approaches to Comprehension

## *Copy – Change*

### *Keep the Content Change the Form*

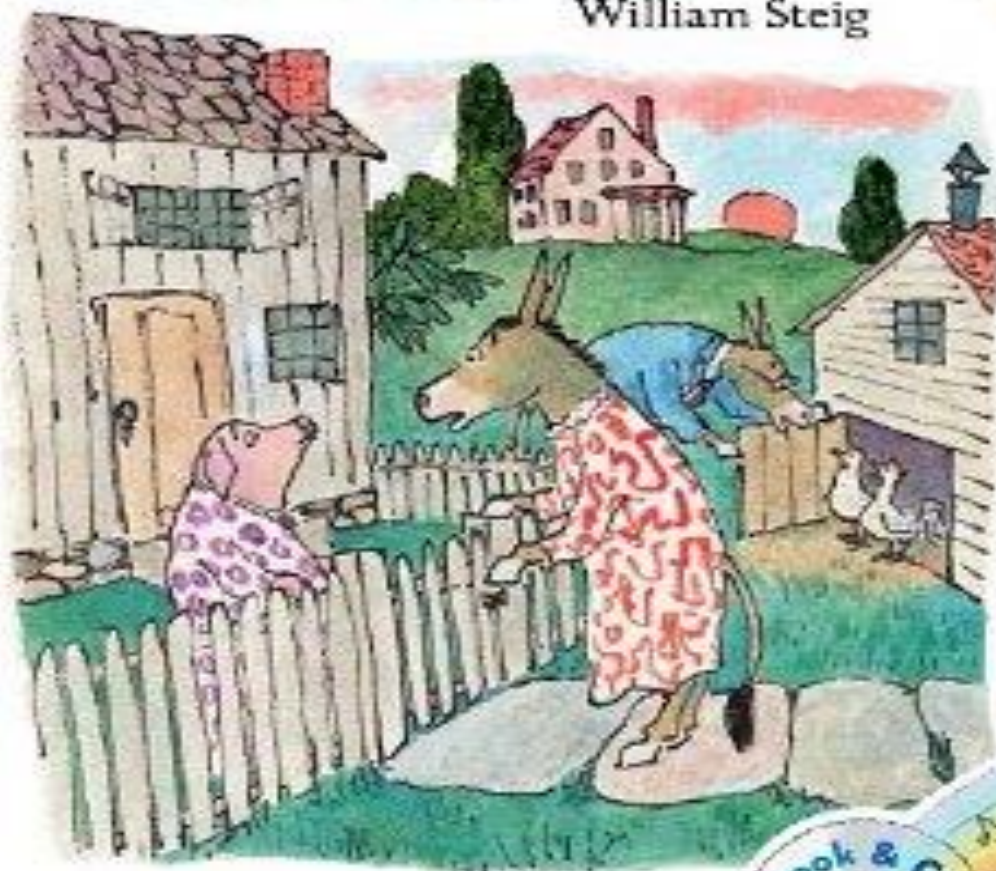
- *Story > Readers Theater Script*
- *Story > Poem*
- *Story > Journal Entry*



# Sylvester *and the* MAGIC PEBBLE

William Steig

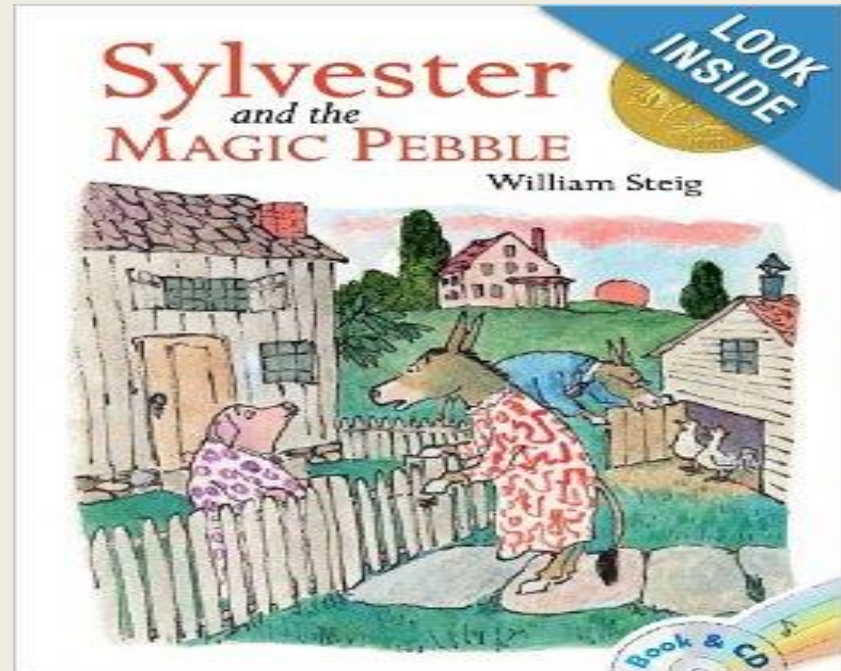
LOOK  
INSIDE



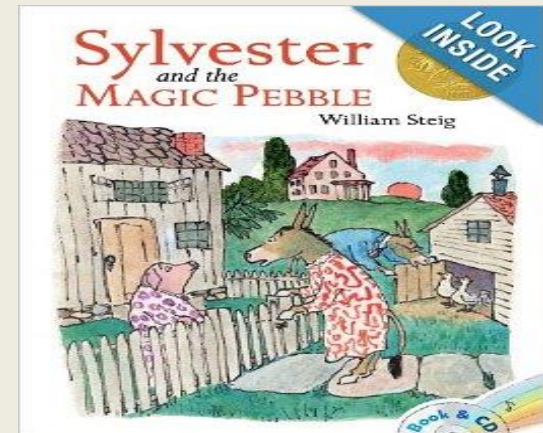
Book & CD



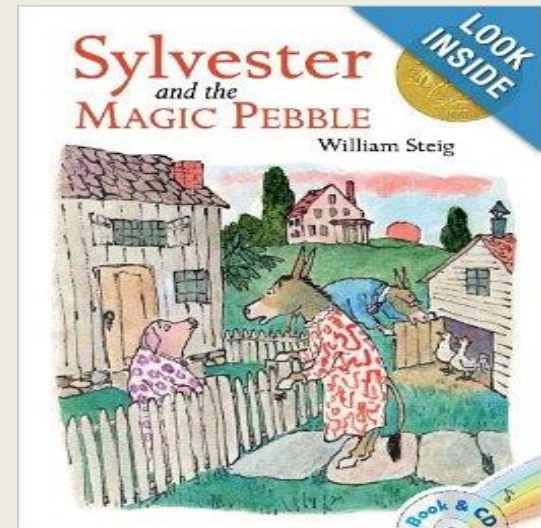
Sylvester Duncan lived with his mother and father on Acorn Road in Oatsdale. One of his hobbies was collecting pebbles of unusual shape and color.



On a rainy Saturday during vacation he found a quite extraordinary one. It was flaming red, shiny, and perfectly round. As he was studying this remarkable pebble, he began to shiver, probably from the excitement, and the rain felt cold on his back. “I wish it would stop raining,” he said.



To his great surprise the rain stopped. It didn't stop gradually as rains usually do. It CEASED! The drops vanished on the way down, everything was dry, and the sun was shining as if the rain had never existed...



# Creative Approaches to Comprehension

## *Copy – Change*

### *Keep the Content Change the Form*

- *Story > Readers Theater Script*
- *Story > Poem*
- *Story > Journal Entry*

# Sylvester Prequel

Young Sylvester was eating his usual breakfast of oats and barley when all of a sudden,... “OUCH!” he cried. Never had Sylvester experienced such awful pain. From inside his mouth he pulled a clear circular stone. Although he was now missing a tooth, his new fascination with pebbles eased his intense pain.

# Sylvester to Song (Oh My Darling)

In a meadow, on vacation, on a rainy Saturday.  
A little donkey found a pebble and he wished  
the rain away.

Sylvester marveled at this pebble that would do  
as he would say.

Until he wished himself a rock and now he can't  
wish that away.

# Sylvester to Song (Beverly Hill Billies)

Let me tell you the story of a donkey named Syl.  
Loved to collect pebbles and couldn't get his fill.  
Then one day he began to shiver.  
For on the ground there was a gift from the  
Giver.



# Sylvester to Song (Rain Rain Go Away)

Rain rain go away,  
I've got rocks to pick today.  
Here's a cool one,  
Round and fun.  
Oh look now!... Here comes the sun!

# Sylvester to Song (Gilligan's Island)

Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale  
A tale of a fateful mule  
Whose unplanned metamorphosis  
Kept him out of school.

# Sylvester to Song (Gilligan's Island)

Sylvester lived on Acorn Road.

His Mom and Dad did too.

Sylvester took a stroll one day

And disappeared from view....

And disappeared from view.

# Creative Approaches to Comprehension

*Copy – Change*

*Keep the Content Change the Form*

*Keep the Form Change the Content*

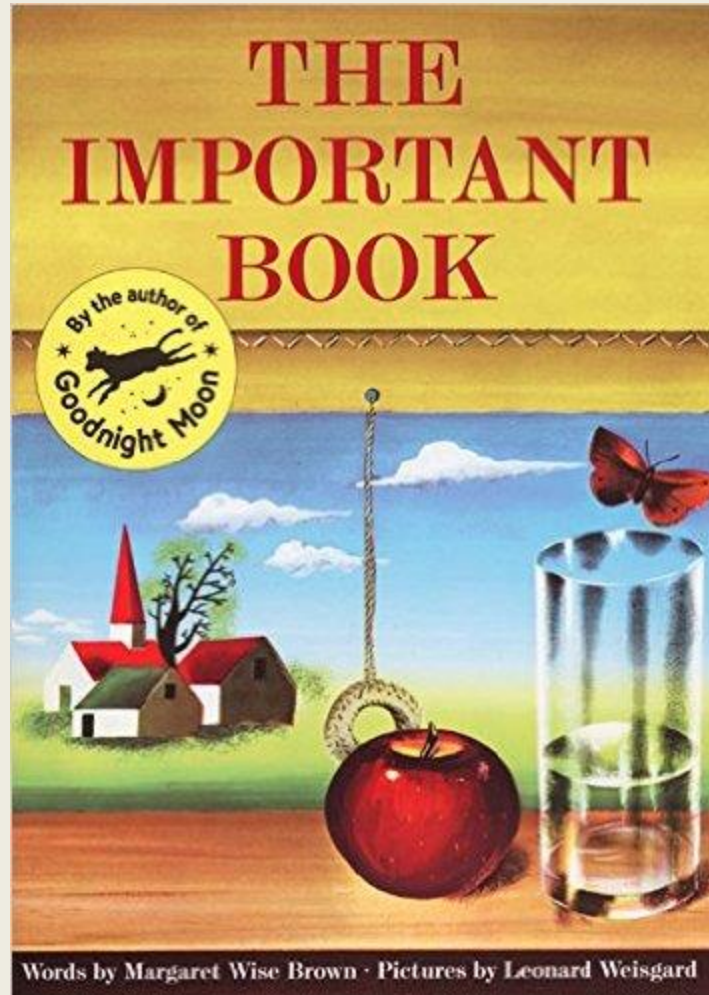
# Creative Approaches to Comprehension

*Copy – Change*

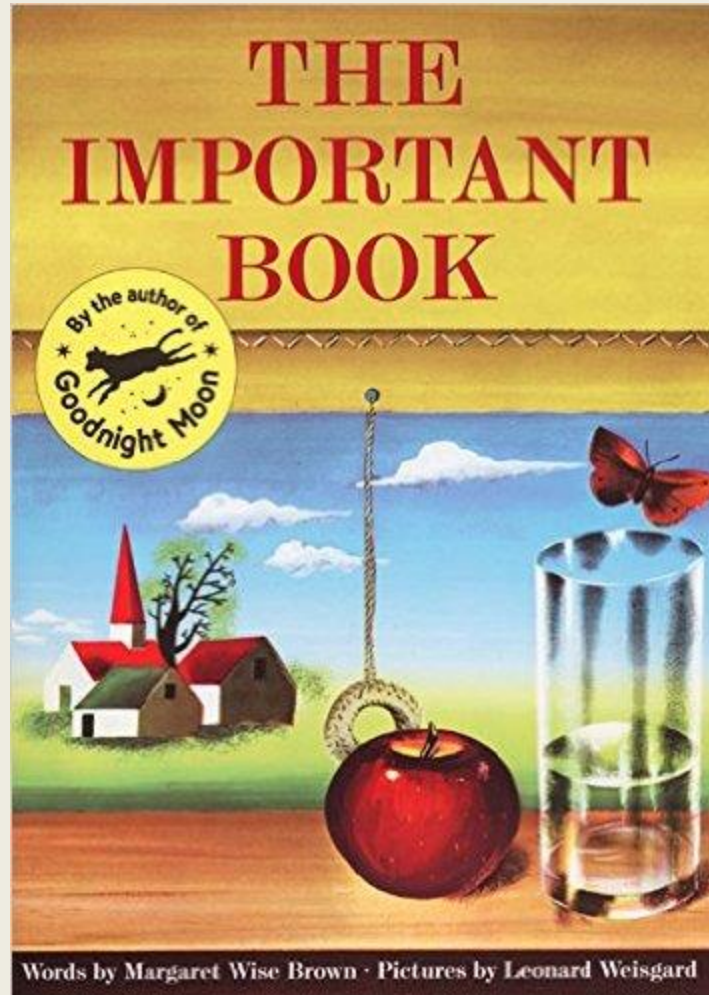
*Keep the Content Change the Form*

*Keep the Form Change the Content*

# Keep the Form Change the Content



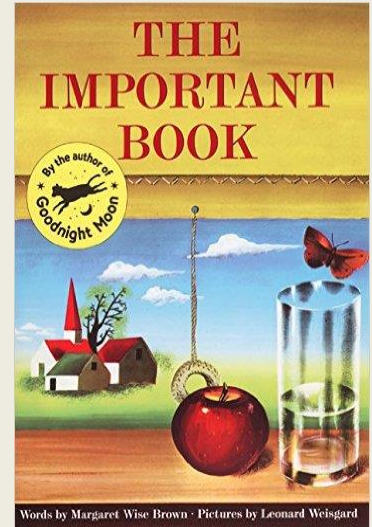
# Keep the Form Change the Content





# Keep the Form Change the Content

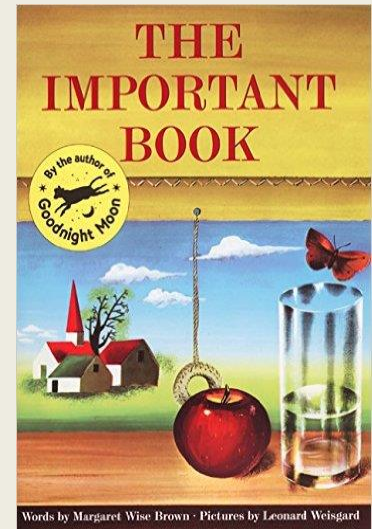
The important thing about a spoon is that you eat with it. It's like a little shovel, you can hold it in your hand. It isn't flat, it's hollow. And you can spoon things up. But the important thing about a spoon is that you eat with it.



# Keep the Form Change the Content

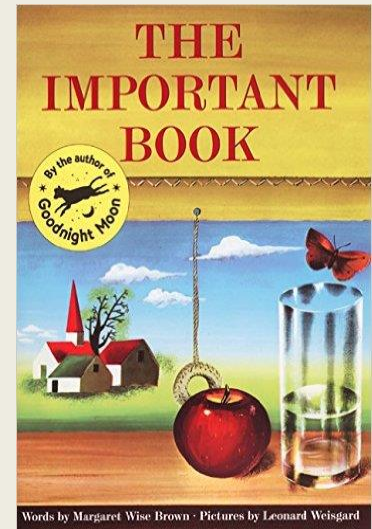
The important thing about grass is that it is green. It grows, is tender and has a sweet smell.

But, the important thing about grass is that it is green.



# Keep the Form Change the Content

What other Important Books can students write?



# Keep the Form Change the Content

What other Important Books can students write?

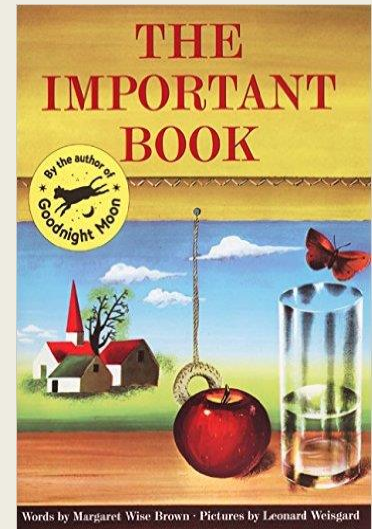
*The Important Thing about Me.*

*The Important Thing about My Mom.*

*The Important Thing about Arizona.*

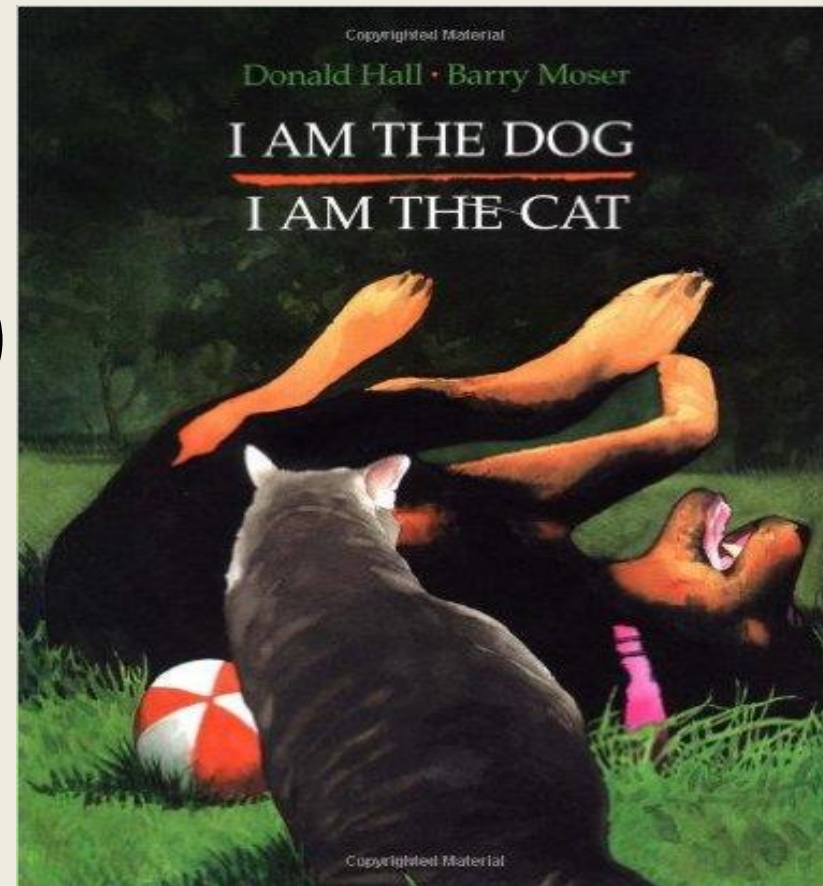
*The Important Thing about Christmas.*

*The Important Thing about President \_\_\_\_\_*



# Keep the Form Change the Content

**(Also Compare-Contrast)**



Dog: I am the dog.  
I like bones.  
I like to *bury* bones.  
As for eating, I can take it or leave it—  
but I like it when *they* feed me.





CAT: I am the cat.  
I don't *care* whether they feed me or not  
as long as I get fed.  
Sometimes I tease them to feed me,  
then turn up my nose at what I get.





Dog: Making the acquaintance of babies,  
I allow them to pull my hair.  
I do not like it,  
but I allow it, for  
I am the dog.

CAT: When babies come into the house,  
I try to vanish.  
Babies are crazy!  
Babies *sit* on you!



# **New Student Authored Books**

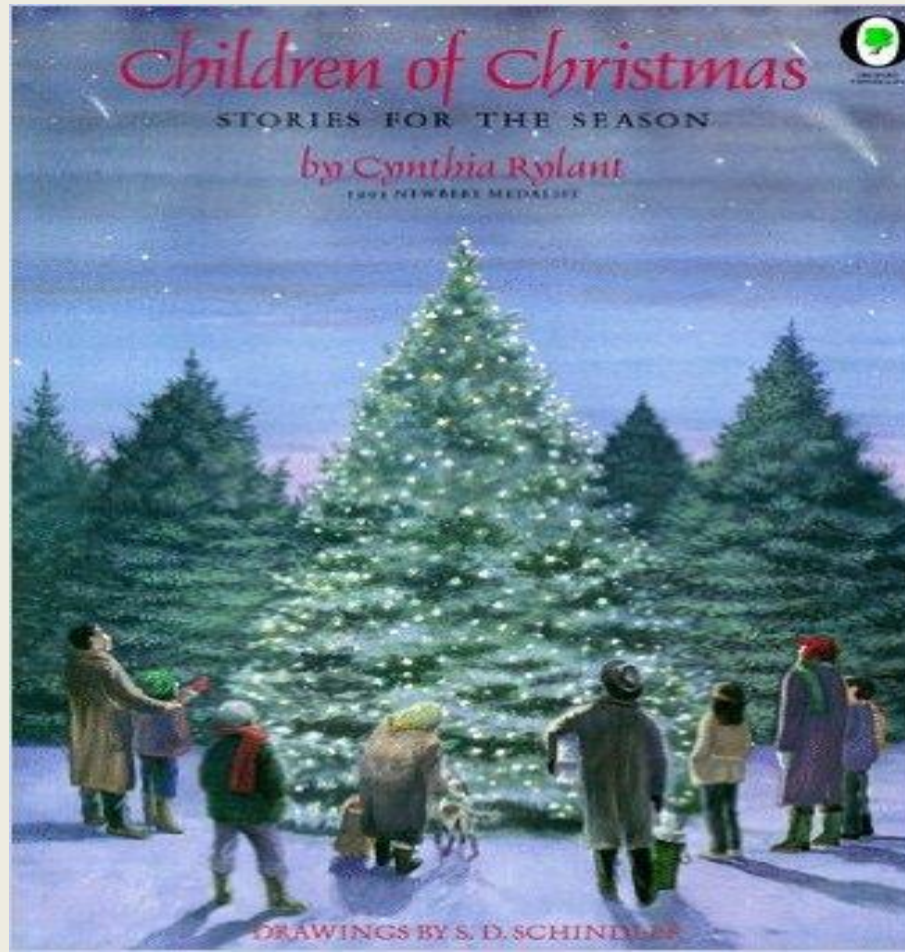
- **I am a Hillary, I am Donald.**
- **I am a Democrat, I am a Republican**
- **I am Arizona, I am Ohio**
- **I am a Tucson, I am a Phoenix**
- **I am Frog, I am a Lizard**
- **I am Harry Potter, I am Sylvester**
- **I am an Deciduous, I am Coniferous**
- **I am a Browns Fan, I am a Steelers Fan**

# Comprehension -- Prevoke

- Prediction based on vocabulary

# Comprehension -- Prevoke

- Prediction based on vocabulary



# Comprehension -- Prevoke

## 1. Introduce key words – *For Being Good*

Phillip

blue veined hands

remembers

worries

pictures

embarrassed

candle glow

wink

cookie dough

leaking bicycle tire

“he misses\_\_\_\_\_”

scared and nervous

grandfather’s room

“Goodnight, Grandpa”

“Goodnight, Son”

# Comprehension -- Prevoke

## 2. Sort the words in various ways

Phillip

blue veined hands

remembers

worries

pictures

embarrassed

candle glow

wink

cookie dough

leaking bicycle tire

“he misses\_\_\_\_\_”

scared and nervous

grandfather's room

“Goodnight, Grandpa”

“Goodnight, Son”

# Comprehension -- Prevoke

3. Make a *prediction* on how the story will go

## *For Being Good*

Phillip

cookie dough

blue veined hands

leaking bicycle tire

remembers

“he misses\_\_\_\_\_”

worries

scared and nervous

pictures

grandfather's room

embarrassed

“Goodnight, Grandpa”

candle glow

“Goodnight, Son”

wink



# Comprehension

Comprehension Strategies: **Tableau (Still Life)**

*One Grecian Urn*

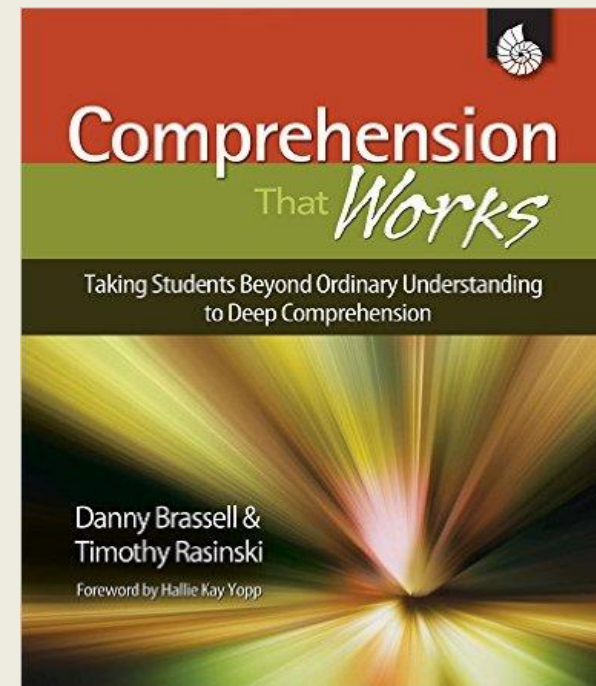
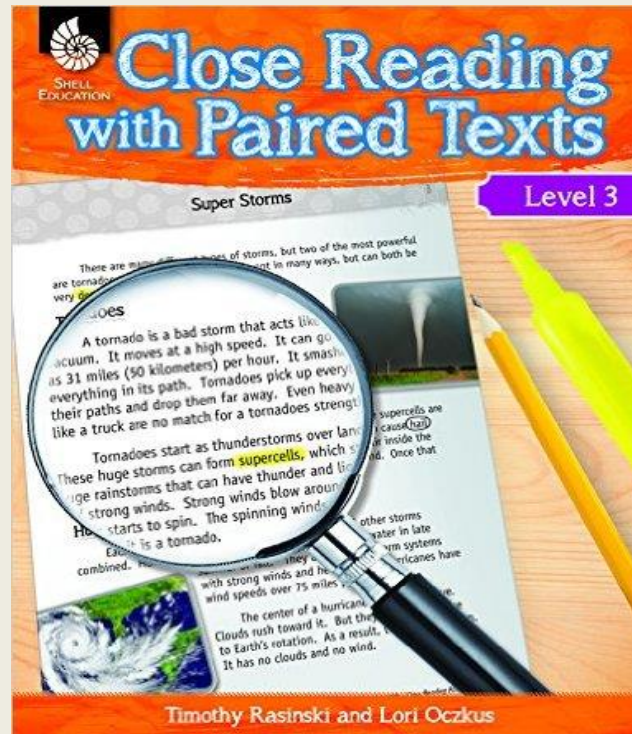




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For more on reading comprehension see:



Oczkus, L., & Rasinski, T. (2016). *Close Reading of Paired Texts (K-5)*.

Huntington Beach: Shell Education/Teacher Created Materials.

Brassell, D., & Rasinski, T. (2012). *Comprehension that Works!*